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Ideals of holiness

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IDEALS OF HOLINESS

AN AID TO PREPARATION FOR
HOLY COMMUNION

BY

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PREFACE ✓

THESE papers are meant to offer help in one of the most difficult and most frequent of our habits of Devotion—our Preparation for Communion. They are based on the conviction that it is a great aid to Faith and Repentance at such a moment, that we should realise most distinctly those positive Ideals of Holiness, which the Holy Eucharist both asserts and helps us to attain.

If these suggestions are found useful, it is to be remembered that they are but suggestions. They will soon cease to be useful, if they are always used literally and exactly, and if the prayers suggested are allowed to take the place of the individual expression of our needs. Nothing can take the place of our own effort, though something may be done to direct that effort along the lines of true fruitfulness. These papers seek to give such general direction and are meant to stimulate individual devotion, showing how the simplest meditation upon the familiar words of the Bible may give new reality to the expression of our Repentance, and may powerfully quicken our Ideals of Holiness in preparation for the Holy Eucharist.

F. W. D.

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IDEALS OF HOLINESS

I

PREPARATION FOR COMMUNION

WITH every suggestion of spiritual revival there comes the hope of being able to take some step forward in deepening the reality and securing the thoroughness of our preparation for Communion. For there it is, at the Altar, that our devotional life finds its centre. There is nothing lacking in the Grace which the Altar brings. Christ is there with all His treasures. We make no doubt of that. But we ourselves are so irresponsible. We lack the true fulness of receptivity. We prepare ourselves so vaguely, so mechanically, so hesitatingly. We approach with such uncertainty, that the effectiveness of Christ's gift of Grace is sadly marred, its full operation is thwarted, and the joy of our Eucharists is lost. We need assurance in our preparation. We want

B

some standard by which we can judge the worthiness of our approach, some rule to impart steadiness to our devotional preparation, some guidance which shall enable us to test the real sincerity of our desire for Communion. "Now do I begin to be a disciple," said St. Ignatius, as in the last days of a long and faithful life he was led off to martyrdom. That is what we ourselves would say, each time that we come to the Altar. We are always beginning. These words are written for those who count themselves still beginners in the Eucharistic Life and are seeking help in the perfection of their Eucharistic preparation. In the succeeding chapters detailed suggestions for self-examination with definite prayers and other simple helps to an earnest and sincere preparation will be offered. This opening chapter deals with the general aspect of our preparation for Communion, suggesting principles and ideals rather than supplying the actual forms in which such a preparation might be realised.

A

Our preparation for any particular Eucharist begins further back than we generally allow. Our daily life is the real preparation. And we need to realise how closely all our life and work and habits of thought and action are knit up into our Eucharists. The real preparation lies there, in those

principles by which our daily life is governed, those habits of belief by which our every-day actions are guided, those aspirations after fellowship with God and our neighbours by which our life is ruled, those daily obediences by which our will is trained and disciplined. It is what we are in our work, what we are in ordinary intercourse with others, in hours of leisure and recreation, rather than what we are in the few moments of our prayer, that really determines the worth and fitness of our preparation. And this is hard to recognise. Yet what we have been in our work makes us what we are when we set ourselves to pray. Our life is one continuous whole. It cannot be cut up into isolated segments of work and play and prayer, each unrelated to the other.

The remote preparation for our Eucharist, then, will lie in the general tenour of the whole life. There are certain general features which characterise the faithful Communicant in relation to all his work, and these will prove to be the very elements of preparedness, which need only special emphasis and definite articulation to make the more immediate preparation for Communion worthy and adequate.

At the back of all the Christian's power for work and acceptance of duty lies the certainty of *the Holy Spirit's Indwelling*. For each day's need he is made sufficient by the stirring up of this

divine Gift. It strengthens and enables him for every emergency. The conscious recollection of that indwelling Presence is the secret of his steadfastness, of his unfailing cheerfulness and of his spirit of loving fellowship. It is that same Indwelling which is the necessary preparation for our Communicant life. The fulness of the Holy Spirit's Presence is needed to prepare the soul fitly for that intimate Presence of Christ which the Blessed Eucharist brings.

Behind the Christian's habit of work lies also *the certainty of God's love*. To know with all the assurance of definite conviction that God has planned the new day for us in love, to realise this with clear and conscious faith at the beginning of each day, is to move out to the new needs and new service of the day, amply armed and equipped for all the manifold emergencies of life, be they surprises of sorrow or of joy. Belief in the fulness of *God's Power* to protect, to guard, to shield, to conquer—this also is one of the principles of the Christian life which underlies our readiness for what God wills. We know that all things move according to His Will, that out of evil the resources of His infinite wisdom can bring good. Trusting in His Power we bravely move forward and take our place in the forefront of the battle. And to belief in God's Love and Power, we add, as one of the principles of our daily life, a real

desire for fellowship with God. Expressed in different ways, more or less conscious, this persistent search after that divine fellowship, for which we know we were made, stamps its mark upon all our life. Our prayers, our Bible-reading, our meditations are just the daily signs of that desire for closer union. And in some way or other also our daily life is dignified with *a sense of vocation*. We know that God has called us to our work; with varying degrees of clearness, we recognise that God has indeed been before us in our lives, and has prepared this very way for us to walk in—a way that is humble and perhaps unrecognised of men, but for us the way of happiness and strength, because we feel the hand of God's good guidance laid upon us.

Such a spirit as this is our constant and continuous preparation for our Communion. All these elements—realisation of the Indwelling of the Holy Ghost, belief in God's Love and Power, desire of fellowship with God, and a sense of vocation, which enter into the making of our daily life as Christians, constitute for us the regular, *remote* preparation for our Eucharist.

B

Our *immediate* preparation consists in the distinct focussing of all these elements of our daily

life upon the expected Eucharistic visit of Christ. It is a preparation which makes a demand upon all the powers of our life, but which need not take up very much time, if we are earnest. It is a preparation which ought, as time goes on, to be made without the need of manuals. Doubtless, at the beginning of our Eucharistic life, we do need the help of books, to widen our horizon, to show us the possibilities of prayer, to extend the range of our vision, to set us examples of devotion, to disclose the secrets of growing penitence and deepening purpose. But surely, these books are but the scaffold, by which we are helped to raise the structure of our own devotional habits. The time comes when they must be put carefully aside. One of the surest causes of unreality in our Eucharistic preparation is that we will not trust ourselves without books. To prepare worthily without a book is indeed a great responsibility. But it is one which we ought presently to be able to accept. If we really want to speak to our intimate friend about any subject on which we feel deeply, can we not always find words in which to express our wishes? Must it not really be the same, when we want to speak to the closest Friend of all? The Friend Who knows what is in man? He does not ask for elaborate phrasing, He does not want beauty of diction, He just asks for the intimate confidences

of the souls for whom He died. Can we not speak to Him out of the fulness of our own loving hearts without the mediation of any books? All that Christ seeks is just ourselves, in all the simplicity of our self-oblation. And thus it is, that what we need to do for a worthy preparation, is just to make distinct and clear, to emphasise and articulate, in view of Christ's fresh visit to the soul, the principles which govern our whole life. Our Eucharist is not something that stands absolutely apart from the rest of our life. All our life is informed and moulded by It and continually breathes its spirit.

C

Thus our *immediate* preparation leads us to realise first *the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit*, to stir up the Gift that is within us, and to rely upon His inspiration and guidance for the special spiritual effort of approach to our Blessed Lord's Sacramental Presence. Upon the Spirit's help we can surely rely, to give reality to our devotion, to command concentration of thought, to give strength to our will and to direct aright our affections.

Then we need in our preparation to focus directly our *belief in God's love*. Is it hard to find words of our own in which to express this belief, if it has been indeed the controlling

motive of our daily life? All that is needed is such a simple Act as this:—

O my God, the God of love, I believe that in love Thou hast made me for Thyself. I believe that in love Thy Son Jesus Christ has died upon the Cross for my salvation. I believe that in love Thy Holy Spirit dwells within my heart to-day. Help me, O God, to bear brave witness to Thy Love, and to be united more firmly to Thee in this Sacrament of Thy Love.

All of us are capable of some such simple expression of faith as this. Beware of letting any such act become a stereotyped form, lest it lose its power. Do not try to *remember*, but just express what is in your heart. Realise yourself, as you prepare to meet Jesus.

In this way it is possible to make a simple Act of Faith, in our own words expressing the certainty of our *belief in the power of God* to bless us with the Gift of our dear Lord's Eucharistic Presence. And again, if a form of words is suggested here, it is not given in order to be learnt or used without individual assimilation, but only to show how simple the words may be. For surely if we live all our communicant life in the certainty of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, we must have meditated upon It sufficiently to be able to express our belief in simple words of our own. It cannot

mean much for us in our daily struggle, if we cannot tell Jesus Himself what we look forward to at His coming. Words such as these would come to our lips:—

O Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that in this Blessed Sacrament Thou art really present, true God and true Man, in the fulness of Thy Sacred Humanity and in the power of Thy Godhead, to give Thyself to me, to make me partaker of Thy infinite merits, to give me a new gift of Eternal Life, to knit me into closer fellowship with Thee, Thou Lover of my soul.

To focus more immediately our *Desire for Fellowship with Jesus* in view of this special act of union towards which we look, is to lay our life at once by the side of His, to realise our shortcomings and to quicken our desire for holiness in those very elements of our life which we see to be weakest. Thus it covers our self-examination and means our penitence. Better it is to take the Beatitudes, or the Fruit of the Spirit, or the Gifts of the Spirit, or St. Paul's description of Love, as the means of our self-realisation than the Ten Commandments. For the positive standard which the former offer is far more stimulating and conducive to reality and true insight than the negative rule of the Decalogue. The result of this renewed desire of Fellowship with Jesus, made under the impulse of such a study of self,

would be, first, some simple Act of Penitence, such perhaps as this :—

O Lord my God, be merciful to me a sinner. I am truly sorry that I have sinned against Thee. I desire to renew and amend my life and to do all in Thy strength and for Thy sake. Take from me all my iniquities, that, purified in body and soul, I may worthily approach Thee in this Holy Eucharist.

And then, emphasising the thought of God's Holiness and the wonder of His condescension in stooping so low that He might take us up into the fellowship of His grace, we should probably want to make an Act of Humility.

Almighty, Holy, and Infinite God, Who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I am unworthy to partake of Thy spotless mysteries. I am weak and sinful, so wanting in love, so feeble in my response to Thy great Love. But Thou art long-suffering, pitiful, and mighty to save. I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof. Accept me, O Lord, through the merits of the Passion of Thy Dear Son, the King of Righteousness, the Lord of Life, the Lover of Souls.

Then the last element of our daily life to be represented in our immediate preparation is *the offering of our daily work*. What we have been doing under the more or less conscious sense of

the divine vocation, we need now to realise, definitely offering it for God's acceptance. To look at our work in the aggregate is to realise the daily mercies with which God has perpetually blessed us, and our sense of vocation thus leads to an Act of Thanksgiving and an Act of Intention. We cannot offer our work to God without acknowledging that, when it succeeds, it is God's power and His goodness that have blessed it, and when it fails, it is the part of Christ the consummator to give completion and achievement to our weak efforts, if only we surrender it all to Him. Our Act of Thanksgiving made in our preparation will enable us to make very real to ourselves the Sanctus and the Preface in the Eucharistic Service itself.

I desire, Almighty God, in this Holy Eucharist to offer up to Thee, with the spotless Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, my own true and grateful thanks for all Thy countless mercies. Wonderful art Thou in Thy loving-kindness, most gracious art Thou in Thy infinite tenderness, and ever hast Thou abounded in manifold blessings, both of body and soul, towards me and those whom I love. Accept, O Lord, with this sacrifice the offering of my heartfelt thanksgiving and preserve in me an ever-grateful heart, O God of mercy and of grace.

Then there rises before our eyes the definite vision of the new grace, strength, blessing or

virtue which we seek, for ourselves and for others, in this Eucharist. This Communion is to be the enrichment of our life and service, of our oblation and discipleship, in some particular direction of which we are conscious. Doubtless it will be more to us than anything we can picture or expect, but we shall gain concentration by directing our hopes towards this or that special attainment. Thus we can focus our powers of attention and realise the definiteness of God's gift of grace. We would will *all* that God wills for us and for His whole Church, but we can only express articulately those special needs of which we are clearly conscious.

O Lord Jesus Christ, in union with that divine Intention with which at the last Supper and on the Cross Thou didst offer Thyself to God the Father, I would now offer unto Thee in this Holy Eucharist this my desire, my purpose, and intention. May it please Thee, Lord Jesus, and do Thou grant that in Thee and through Thee, with all Thy whole Church, I may be accepted of the Father, and may at length attain to the joy of perfect fellowship with Thee, O Lord my Strength and my Redeemer.

The words of such Acts as can be printed here, of course, must miss all the definiteness and precision of purpose which would belong to our own individual prayers. They are only meant as rough examples to show how simple our words may be

and how easy it is to express all the necessary thoughts, desires, and feelings, at such a moment, in words that are both adequate and within the compass of us all.

It comes to this. Jesus wants just ourselves, as we really are. He wants the offering of the whole life, with its present powers of work, its present motives, its present capacity of vision, its present aims, its present intimacies, its present hopes, its present infirmities. And our Preparation is just the fresh, vigorous, faithful effort of the soul to gather itself up, and come in all the fulness of its powers to Him Who waits in the plenitude of His love, to bless and enrich us with the strength and fruitfulness of His own sacred Humanity.

It is upon lines, such as these, of simplicity and earnest reality, that we must hope to renew our preparation for each happy Eucharist as it comes. And may the Holy Spirit, Who is the Minister of Christ's Eucharistic Presence, prepare us more and more worthily for this greatest of earthly Gifts.

II

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

ONE of the greatest difficulties which we experience in our Preparation for Communion is our self-examination. It becomes so formal and so unreal. The questions which we use have so little relation to the realities of our daily life. The temptations which they suggest are not ours. We put down our book, convinced either that our lives are riddled with numberless secret sins of which we have never been at all conscious, or that we may acquit ourselves of most sins altogether, or that our conscience must be irretrievably hardened and can no longer respond to the sense of sin. This happens with most of us, because we have explored so little the possibilities of self-examination, and have been content with one single method of preparation, which, by its very monotony, has deadened our responsiveness and spoiled the freshness of our penitential efforts. These papers suggest different methods by which we may make an adequate penitential preparation for our Communions. These suggestions in turn

will become just as valueless presently as the old methods have become, if we simply adopt them slavishly and to the letter. They need to be individually adapted, and worked over, and added to, and altered to fit the actual experience of our own lives. But if they are accepted as hints only, for our own individual development afterwards, then they will stimulate reality and bring light to the conscience.

It is not only by negative questions that we can exercise our hearts in penitence. There is the positive way of quickening desire. To set before us the clear purpose of seeking ardently any one virtue is in itself the manifest repudiation of the corresponding vice, and is generally far more efficacious as an act of penitence than the mere interrogation of the conscience as to the commission of the sin. In the preparation suggested here, both the negative method of examining the conscience and the positive method of quickening the desire and directing the will, find their place side by side.

We will take as our guide the Fruit of the Spirit, as declared by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, and use that as the way of preparation. First, we shall read over the great Ideal—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance. We shall ask God to forgive us all breaches of His law of the

Spirit, and pray that in this very Eucharist, to which we look, we may receive just those graces which we find we need. Our simple prayer would take some such form as this :—

O Lord Jesus Christ, I come to Thee to prepare my soul for the fresh gift of Thy most precious Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Pour into my soul the Light of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may see my sins. Give me true repentance, and quicken my heart and my will that I may ardently desire and steadfastly seek all that is holy and good.

And then, one by one, we look at the graces which the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit seeks to create in us, and ask God to forgive our poor and weak achievement, to pardon our deliberate and wilful disobedience, and to direct our minds upon the riches of the Eucharistic Gift. Thus we would continue, slowly and with great deliberation :—

O Lord, Thou hast taught me that *Love* is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, Forgive me all want of Love for Thee—all selfishness—all hatred and malice—all unkindness—all uncharitable thoughts—all that degrades love.

And grant that by this Holy Eucharist I may gain a new power of love for Thee—that all human love and friendship may be purified and strengthened by this Sacrament of Love.

And then we can take the second Fruit of the Spirit, *Joy*, and with a similar address to our Blessed Lord direct our prayer afresh.

Forgive me all discontent—all grumbling, despair and hopelessness—all yielding to the sense of failure—all sullenness towards others—all that has dimmed the light or dashed the brightness of any other life—all delight in that which is wrong—all sullen and unready acceptance of Thy Will.

And I desire to gain by the Gift of this Holy Eucharist—the spirit of triumphant joy and delight in the power of the Spirit's Indwelling—a new and confident brightness in the certainty of Thy Presence—power to enter fully into the happiness of others—grace to bear radiant witness for Thee in all that is beautiful and holy.

Other words and thoughts suitable to our own condition, but of the same simple nature, would occur to us, and then we would pass to the next great fruit of *Peace*.

Forgive me, O Blessed Prince of Peace, all restlessness of spirit—all the separation from Thee which sin has brought—all variance and opposition—all irritation and peevish discontent—all neglect to put myself at peace with Thee—all want of ready fellowship with others—all want of forgiveness of others.

And grant that in this Sacrament of Peace I may gain a spirit of peaceful rest in Thee—subdual

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of all warring passions—singleness of heart and aim and purpose—the perfect peace of a mind that is stayed on Thee—the steadfast will to be at peace with all—remission of all my sins.

Then there comes before us the Fruit of *Long-suffering*.

O suffering and patient Jesus, grant me true repentance for all my sins of impatience—all rebellion against Thy gentle leading—all impatience with my own slow progress—impatience with others—all words of haste—all want of consideration for others—especially for those at home—all refusal to suffer according to thy Will.

Grant me the spirit of patient endurance—that I may cheerfully accept hardness—that I may increase in the spirit of ghostly strength—that I may bear with others' infirmities—that I may endure persecution for Thy sake.

Gentleness differs from Long-suffering in emphasising the active relation which we bear to others rather than the passive spirit in which we accept their relation to us.

O Gentle Jesus, make me truly sorry for all my roughness of manner—harshness of speech—the spirit of contradiction—all want of loving tenderness—especially in the home.

Grant that by the grace of this Eucharist I may become more Christlike in my gentleness—that I may be tender-hearted—kind to those in error, in suffering, and in trouble—considerate to the weak.

The sixth Fruit of the Spirit in our lives is
Goodness.

Do Thou, Who art perfectly good and worthy of all love, forgive in me all that is evil, selfish, and unkind—all want of self-sacrifice—all greediness, and avarice, and neglect to help others—all lowering of the standard of goodness—all that is unholy, impure, and un-Christlike.

Grant that by this all-holy gift of the Altar, I may gain a true love of holy things—the spirit of true holiness—that I may grow in the loving service of others—may set the ideal of Thy holy Life ever before me—and may have a true inward love of goodness for Thy sake.

In this list of the Fruit of the Spirit it is probable that *Faith* bears its passive rather than its active sense, and means fidelity, trustworthiness, honesty. In this sense it would suggest such a direction of prayer as this :—

O Jesus, the Amen and the Faithful Witness, grant that I may be truly sorry for all want of faith—all disloyalty to friends—to employers—all breach of trust—all insincerity—all broken resolutions—all suspicious thoughts of others—all want of true reliance upon Thee and Thy promises.

Grant that in this Holy Sacrament of Thy Faithfulness, I may gain a deeper power of personal loyalty and submission to Thee—a fuller integrity of purpose—a true inward honesty—utter truthfulness—that I may be true to all the obligations of work and friendship.

The virtue of *Meekness* touches the inner spirit of our life.

Forgive me, O Lord Jesus, all bitter resentment—pride—self-assertion—want of humility—refusal to take the lowest place—conceit—exaggeration—love of flattery—love of eccentricity—self-justification—self-pleasing.

Grant that in this Sacrament of Humility, I may gain the true spirit of inner obedience—lowliness—f forbearance towards others—readiness to bear insult, wrong, and injury for Thy sake—that I may take pleasure in ways of humility and may love to be unknown.

The last virtue of *Temperance* covers the whole sphere of self-control.

Make me, O Lord, truly sorry for all my want of control—all passionate excess—inordinate affection—misuse of powers of body, mind, or soul—all unchastity of thought or word or deed—self-indulgence—want of discipline—all refusal to control wandering thoughts—neglect to direct my will aright.

Grant me in this Sacrament of Power the spirit of discipline—true chastity, self-control, and the spirit of reverence—that I may bring all my powers of body, mind, and soul in submission to the healthful energies of the indwelling Spirit.

If it were possible, this part of our preparation would end with choosing one special subject for our *special intention* at the Eucharist. We can

rely upon the guidance of the Holy Ghost, whose help we shall have invoked at the beginning, to direct our thoughts aright, and to bring us worthily to that Blessed Feast, which His own consecrating power has prepared for us.

III

THE BEATITUDES

IN this chapter on preparation for the Eucharist, we shall consider the Beatitudes of our Lord as a standard of Holiness.

After asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it would be well to wait and dwell a moment upon the fact that this Ideal, which we are about to contemplate, has been given to us by our Blessed Lord Himself. It is not a disciple's description of the Christian life, nor even an apostle's portraiture of the perfect Man, Christ Jesus, but it is the Ideal of the Blessed Life which comes to us from the lips of Christ Himself. And we may feel a special confidence, that what He has Himself taught us so ardently to desire, He will Himself fulfil in our lives, as He comes to us afresh in the Blessed gift of the Eucharist.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is the ideal of Humility. We may appeal to Jesus in some such words as these :—

O Lord Jesus Christ, God Almighty, Who, though
Thou wast rich, yet for our sakes didst become

poor, that we, through Thy poverty, might be rich, help me to be truly sorry for all my pride that has led me into so many sins. Forgive me all my selfishness—love of display—ostentation—my love of praise—wilfulness—neglect of dependence upon God—my want of faith—my neglect of Thee in the humility of Thy Sacraments—my resisting of the Holy Spirit—reliance upon my own unaided natural powers.

Make me to love and to seek the way of true humility—to love Thee in the lowliness of Thy Sacraments—to adhere firmly to Thee in faith—to worship Thee truly—to obey Thee gladly—in all things to seek Thy glory—that I may be happy in this life in the powers of the kingdom of heaven, and may enjoy Thee more fully hereafter.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. This is the law of sorrow and the charter of hope.

O Jesus, Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, forgive me all want of sorrow for my sins—all impenitence and hardness of heart—all refusal to bear sorrow faithfully—all rejection of the Cross in my life—all despondency and thoughts of despair—all want of joy in the comforts of the faith.

O Jesus, God of all comfort, give me true penitence—a ready will to accept suffering for Thy sake—the joy of the Holy Spirit—true sympathy with

others. Make me to rejoice in Thy Presence—to be satisfied with the comfort of Thy Sacraments—to lead others into the way of peace and rest in Thee.

The third Beatitude presents the most characteristic feature of the new ideal, Meekness. *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

Gentle Jesus, silent under persecution and patient under every trial, express Image and glory of the Father, forgive me all my want of meekness—my impatience—self-assertion—readiness to retaliate—my returning evil for evil—hastiness and want of self-control—my impulsive answers—my contradictions—my refusal to keep silence—my weakness in resisting provocation—my feelings of self-importance and love of self-vindication.

And grant that by the grace of this Eucharist I may gain true self-control—steadfast trust in Thee—forgetfulness of self—power of endurance and witness for Thee—strength quietly to bear injury and neglect. And do Thou, O Lord, in all that I suffer wrongfully, undertake for me, that in all things Thy power and Thy glory may be revealed in me, for Thou alone art the Giver of victory, and to Thee the inheritance of the earth belongs.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. This is the law of Zeal.

O Lord Jesus, Whose Sacred Heart was straitened till the Will of the Father was accomplished, grant me true sorrow for all my want of zeal—my wilful ignorance of Thy Word—neglect of sacred study—my poor ideals—my sloth and listless service—want of witness—neglect of intercession—lack of missionary spirit—my selfish ambitions—energies so largely absorbed in worldly things—the poverty of my prayers and weakness of expectation in spiritual things.

Teach me, Lord Jesus, to be more zealous in Thy service—to expect great things—to deepen my desire for holiness—to raise my aspirations—to be diligent in the use of all Thy means of grace. Make me to love all that is holy for Thy sake. Satisfy me with Thy goodness and fill me with Thy grace.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. This is the ideal of Mercy.

O merciful and gracious Saviour, I am heartily sorry for all my ungentle ways, for all my unkindness and thoughtlessness—for cruelty of word and deed—for harshness of manner—for all hard judgment—for unforgivingness—for all cherished resentment—for want of love towards others—for all kind service withheld from those in trouble and need—for all want of gentleness towards the dumb creation.

Grant to me, most merciful God, forgiveness for all my sins, and make me thankful for the

abundance of mercy shown in Thy frequent forgiveness. Fill me with unselfish love and the spirit of gentleness and mercy towards all, in thought and word and deed.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. This is the law of Purity.

Lord Jesus, Who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, Holy God, Sinless and Perfect Man, make me sorry for all that has stained the purity and holiness of my life—all that has defiled Thy image within me—all that has defiled the temple of the Holy Ghost—immodest and unchaste thoughts—unclean words, acts unholy and impure—all that has harmed the innocence of other souls—all want of restraint—all resistance to the promptings of the Spirit of Holiness.

Make me, Lord Jesus, by this Holy Eucharist to have a greater love of holiness and purity—give me singleness of purpose and purity of aim in Thy service, that in all my thoughts, words, and deeds, I may be inspired by Thy Holiness, and may attain at length to the pure glory of the Beatific Vision.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. This is the rule of Peace.

Jesus, Prince of Peace, forgive me all the ill-will, pride, and unkindness that have set variance between me and others—all want of readiness

to heal divisions and restore friendliness and love—all discontent—all want of generous trust in others—and lack of loving service.

And grant me, O Lord, the will ever to seek true peace of soul in Thy forgiveness, to submit all my impulses to the guiding of the Holy Spirit of Peace—make me to love peaceableness for Thy sake, and in all things to set forward the peace and happiness of others, that I may enjoy the sacred peace of Thy children in this world, and may come at length to the eternal peace of the Father's Home in Heaven.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
This is the law of Faithful Witness.

Jesus, Faithful and True Witness, Who for our sakes didst suffer death upon the Cross, forgive me all my cowardice, my want of courageous witness for the Truth—my insincerities—my lack of trust in Thy help and in the power of the Holy Spirit—my denials of Thee and of the Faith.

Grant, O Blessed Jesus, King of Martyrs, that I may have a more sincere desire to witness for Thee bravely in my daily life by my faithful, un-murmuring, and glad service. Confirm my faith in Thee, increase my hope, deepen my love, and grant that in this Holy Eucharist I may dedicate myself anew to Thy service, and may gain courage, perseverance, and strength to serve Thee to the end.

If there is time, it will be of great help to wait after reading each one of the Beatitudes, and, before self-examination and prayer, to think carefully how Jesus Christ Himself in His life has fulfilled each of these ideals which He sets before us. After such a self-examination, it will be sufficient just to use a simple Act of Faith in the Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, to gather up our special thanksgivings in a simple prayer, and to close with the slow recitation of Psalm XLIII., with its confident expectation of the Joy of the Altar.

IV

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

THE sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Spirit will supply a suggestive outline of Preparation. They cover all the relations of our life and quicken all the faculties of our personality, so that they form a very natural aid to that gathering up of all our forces which the Eucharist demands. It must be remembered again that the phrases here used are only written as *suggestions*, and are meant not to supplant but to stimulate individual analysis and adaptation.

We should properly begin with the *Veni Creator*, and perhaps use the Collect in the Confirmation Office, adapting the pronouns to our own individual use—"Almighty and everliving God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate me, Thy servant, with water and the Holy Ghost," and so to the end, with its prayer for the daily strengthening of our lives with the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The purpose of the first gift of *Wisdom* is that we may know God as the true end of our

lives and enjoy Him as the object of our love. Looking both at our failure to use the fulness of this gift and our desire that it may be quickened by the grace of the Altar, we might say :—

O Lord Jesus, Who through the Indwelling Spirit hast poured upon me the gift of Wisdom, I grieve earnestly for my misuse of this great gift—for all neglect of God—for all forgetfulness that God is the end of my life—and that Thy glory is the object of each day's work.

Grant that by the grace of this Eucharist I may gain a new knowledge of God—may set my life aright to serve Thee truly—may put God first—may find joy in the obedient service of Thee in all things.

Understanding is the gift by which we are taught how to know, to love, and to serve God, how to use the means of grace, how to reach out to God in Bible-reading and Prayer, how to use the relations of life as means of fellowship with God.

O Lord Jesus, I am truly sorry for all my neglect of the means of grace—for all coldness and distraction in prayer—for all indifference in spiritual things—for the misuse of opportunities—for neglect of the Bible—for all deafness to the call of the Holy Spirit—for all reliance upon self in the things of the Spirit.

I desire in this Holy Eucharist to gain the power of new obedience—to learn the next step Thou wouldest have me take—to offer myself afresh to the teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost.

The gift of *Counsel* touches all our relations with others, all our social life and intercourse, enabling us to help our fellows with loving word and example wherever we may be.

O Lord and Saviour, Whose delights are with the children of men, I repent of all my sins of selfishness—my lack of helpfulness towards others—my dumbness—my want of witness—my bad example—my lack of brotherly love and service.

Grant to me in this Eucharist a new love of others—power to draw others to the knowledge and love of Thee—wisdom to give true counsel to those in need—the will to wait upon Thee for guidance—power always to help others according to Thy Will.

The gift of *Ghostly Strength* is the gift that enables the will to persevere and to overcome evil.

O Jesus, Who hast overcome all the powers of Satan, and hast endured even unto death—I am truly sorry for all my cowardice—my neglect of the Holy Spirit's strength—my impatience—my want of faith that has led me into sin—my moments of despair and fear—my shrinking from simple duties—my distrust of the Divine help—my falling back into old sins.

I desire in this Sacrament of Strength to gain anew the spirit of perseverance, that I may endure to the end—that I may set my will strongly against all that I know to be evil—that I may beat down Satan under my feet. Grant me the gift of true steadfastness and the power to endure temptation, suffering, and sorrow.

All our intellectual life is quickened with the Spirit's gift of *Knowledge*.

O Lord Jesus, with Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, I grieve for my neglect of the Spirit's gift of knowledge—for all self-reliance in intellectual things—for all misuse of my mind, memory, and imagination—for all neglect of the powers of reasoning—for all refusal to learn what is useful and necessary for my work in life—for all energy spent in learning that which is sinful.

Grant that by the grace of this Eucharist my mind may be purified, quickened, and empowered anew—that I may be able to learn what is good and useful and agreeable to Thy Will.

True Godliness is the holiness which the Spirit imparts to the soul.

O Lord Jesus, Perfect in purity and holiness, look upon me with pity and forgive me all my sins—I am truly sorry for all my sins of thought, word, and deed—for all that is unholy and impure—all that defiles the temple of Thy Holy Spirit.

Grant to me a deeper desire for holiness—a stronger love of Thy purity—the gift of sanctification—the remission of all my sins—that I may become good and holy, pure and unselfish, and may so receive Thee as to become Christlike and godly in my life.

The last gift is *Holy Fear*, which enables us to recognise God in all His creatures and to grow in the power of worship.

Holy Jesus, I am sorry for all my irreverence—for thoughtlessness in worship and in life—for making light of holy things—for want of consideration for those who are made in Thy image—for all disrespect to others—for making light of sin. Grant that in this Sacrament of Holiness and Awe, I may gain a new reverence for Thy Holy Mysteries—may learn to see Thee in all things—to love and respect others for Thy sake—may grow in the power of worship—and may ever move among Thy creatures in the spirit of a true worshipper—ever conscious of Thy presence.

It will be found that the use of such an outline as this for the purposes of self-examination will do much to remove the doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the realm of academic truth into the sphere of practical life. It will enable us to realise how every Eucharist makes us grow anew in the Communion of the Holy Ghost.

V

THE PREPARATION OF DESIRE

THESE papers on Preparation for the Holy Eucharist are meant to impart freshness and reality to our self-examination by suggesting how great is the variety of method which we may use. Monotony and familiarity are our greatest perils. For some souls always, and for many souls at certain times, the very form of using questions at all makes the way of preparation very difficult. It is useful, therefore, to recognise that there is a method of preparation which we might call the preparation of *desire*, by which, without insistence upon questions, a true penitence may be evinced and a worthy approach assured. It is possible to throw the emphasis, not so much on our failures and our sorrow for sin, as on our real aspirations and our true hopes of conquest and our struggles after new virtues. To make a real act of desire for any grace is truly to repudiate with all our hearts and wills the sin or failure which the grace corrects. And this positive form of exercising real desire is actually more effective in stirring the will, more assuring in deepening our faith,

more conducive to a hopeful and fruitful approach, than the use of the negative method of self-analysis. In the end, the effect aimed at is the same—the real oblation of the whole will afresh at each Eucharist.

In using this method of approach, after prayer for the help of the Holy Ghost, it would be well to make at once a simple Act of Confession in general terms, which, without entering into careful detail, is yet the acknowledgment of a true sense of sin in the sight of God. Such a general form as the following would be sufficient :—

I confess to Thee, God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the sight of the whole company of heaven, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, my own fault, my own most grievous fault. Wherefore I pray Thee, O God, to have mercy upon me.

Or, if it were preferred, Psalm cxxx., slowly said, would strike the needed note of penitence. Or such a hymn as *Father of Heaven Whose love profound*, or *Not for our sins alone*, would be appropriate.

Then the effort of the soul would be directed towards realising in detail how the visit of Christ will bring new strength and happiness. This focussing of hope and expectation will lead to

fresh and ardent expression of Desire, in which the highest ideals of our life will be deliberately and consciously renewed. Such an Act of Desire may shape itself somewhat like this :—

O Good Jesu, I draw near to the Sacrament of Strength and of Hope. I would renew my faith in the sufficiency of Thy Eucharistic Grace to make me holy and to enable me for all the work of life. Grant to me, in this Blessed Sacrament, true love of Thee—deepening penitence—steadfast faith in Thy Love and Power—surer trust in the workings of Thy Grace—more real love of all the means of union with Thee—love of the Scriptures, of meditation, of prayer, of fasting—a deeper dependence on the Grace of Absolution—a fuller faith in the power of Eucharistic Grace.

Grant to me, Good Lord, in this Blessed Sacrament that I may gain the habit of more abiding joy—a more generous spirit of service—a power of readier sacrifice—greater zeal for the souls of others—a loving and tender care for others—patience and continuance in well-doing—endurance under the discipline of failure and difficulty—a humble acceptance of the penances with which Thou hast disciplined my life—a greater love of intercession—a fuller response to the energies of the Indwelling Spirit—a clearer vision of Thy Holy Purposes, both for me and for Thy whole Church—the power of more courageous witness for Thee and for Thy Truth—a more thankful recognition of Thee at all times.

The exact terms of such an act would be determined quite simply and naturally by our own particular wants. But the effect of it would be to present us with a very clear sense of the dignity and power of the Eucharistic Grace which we seek. It will make us realise more effectively the personal coming of our Blessed Lord, stooping with His infinite condescension to supply our individual wants, and to lead each soul on to full conformity with His Holy Will.

An Act of Hope might be used to express in the simplest terms the great expectation that faith has kindled.

O my God, I hope in Thee, to strengthen me, to comfort me, to help me in all my troubles, to forgive me all my sins, to bring me at last to Thee in heaven. For Thou art my Hope and my Strength and my exceeding great Reward. O my God, I hope in Thee alone, to teach me, to guide me, to rule my will, to hallow my life and to bless me in all my work. In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded.

Our preparation might close with some expression of faith in the power of God to keep our lives afterwards on the higher plane to which the Eucharist has lifted us.

Good Jesu, hear me. Bless me and all who approach Thy Holy Altar. Guard with watchful

tenderness the hearts which shall be hallowed by Thy Holy Mysteries, that as by Thy mercy they receive the healing gifts of eternal salvation, they may retain them through Thy protecting power unto the end.

And, perhaps, after the Eucharist itself, our renewed confidence and joy in the Presence and Power of Jesus might find expression in the familiar words of Psalm cxxi., *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills*, with its overwhelming faith in the Guidance and unslumbering Protection of God, watching continually over our going out and our coming in "from this time forth for evermore."

VI

THE IDEAL OF LOVE

THE description of Love which St. Paul gives in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians may suggest an outline of preparation for the Holy Eucharist.

We recall the fact that the Blessed Sacrament is the Sacrament of Love, springing out of the very Heart of Divine Love, presenting to us Love Incarnate, communicating the gift of Love, uniting us both to God and to one another in a new and living bond of Love. Then we would invoke the Holy Spirit, the fruit of whose indwelling is Love, and ask Him to illumine our minds and purify our hearts, that we may grasp more fully this Ideal of Love and may surrender our wills more entirely to fulfil the Law of Love.

Then we can contemplate in detail the definition of Love in action and use St. Paul's words both as a help to Repentance and a stimulus to new aspiration after Holiness.

Love suffereth long and is kind. Think of the Eternal Patience of the Divine Love and of the Gentleness of the Incarnate Saviour, and appeal to Jesus by His own long-suffering and kindness.

O Lord Jesus Christ, long-suffering and of great kindness, draw me in true repentance to this Sacrament of Thy Love, and make me truly sorry for all my impatience—my hasty, unkind words—impatient looks and deeds—my lack of gentleness and want of tender consideration for others—my ungenerous thoughts.

And grant that by this Holy Eucharist I may grow in tenderness and loving-kindness, and may be gentle and considerate to all for Thy dear sake.

Love envieth not. Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly.

O Lord of Love, Who art meek and lowly of heart, teach me the lowliness of Love. I recall my acts and thoughts of selfishness—my pride—and self-conceit. I have not accepted the vocation which Thou hast given me. I have longed for what Thou hast given to others. Forgive me, O Lord, and make me content with Thy will. I am truly sorry for all the wrong into which pride has led me—unkind self-assertion—ways of eccentricity and self-pleasing. Teach me, O Lord, afresh the holiness of true love and forgive me all that is not seemly and modest in my life.

Grant to me, Lord, in this Sacrament of Humility, true lowliness of heart and mind and will, that I may love others better than myself and Thee above all.

Love seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give

Thy Life a ransom for many, make me more unselfish in my service. I am sorry for spending so much on self—so much interest given to my own amusement and happiness—so little thought for others—so much selfish ambition—so little care for the interests of others—so little zeal for fellowship—such selfish prayers. And I am sorry, gentle Lord, for the hastiness of my passion, for the quickness of resentment, for the ready sensitiveness that has been so easily provoked.

May this Sacrament of unselfish Love give me power to minister lovingly to others, to be gentle in all my ways and tender in all my thoughts.

Love thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.

Do Thou, Who art the Truth, forgive me my sins of untruth. Thou, Who art kind and holy of thought, Who takest pleasure only in that which is good, forgive me who have taken pleasure in unkindness, in evil thoughts, in untruth.

Grant that the Grace of this Sacrament may illumine my mind, and purify my thoughts that I may take pleasure in Thee and may rejoice in Thee and in Thy Truth. Reveal Thyself to me and grant that in Thy Light I may see light and be enabled to bear witness to the Truth in love.

Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth.

O King of Love, Who hast endured for Love even unto death, Who knowest what is in man and

yet dost trust us and believe in us so lovingly, I commit myself anew to Thee. Forgive me all my cowardice and impatience—my distrust of others—my faithlessness—my gloominess—my lack of hope, both for myself and for others.

Grant to me in this Sacrament the love that beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things. Make me to trust more faithfully in Thy Grace and increasingly to find at Thy Altar the Love that never faileth.

Then, with a short thanksgiving for the many signs of love with which God has blessed our lives since our last Eucharist, we might say the Psalm of the Good Shepherd, which speaks so confidently of the Divine Love which never forsakes us in sorrow or in joy, and conclude our Preparation with some simple Act of Love.

O my God, I love Thee, with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, because Thou art perfectly good, and worthy of all love, and because Thy Son Jesus Christ has died upon the Cross for me.

Grant that I may so love my neighbour even as Thou hast loved me. And I desire, for love of Thee, to hate and forsake every sin with which I have ever offended Thee. And I resolve, by Thy Grace, to avoid for the future every occasion of sin. Help me, O God, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

VII

THE IDEAL OF SERVICE

THERE is a passage in the twelfth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, in which, after speaking of the manifold individual ministries to which the members of Christ's Body are called, he portrays the general characteristics which must mark every perfect service and ministry. His words suggest an Ideal of Service, which may well help us in our Preparation, as we bring all our work in remembrance before the Altar, and make fresh offering of our ministry to Him, Who alone can give perfection and worth to all our service.

As we invoke the aid of the Holy Spirit, we shall think of Him as the Spirit of Vocation, Who calls us to our work, keeps alive in us the sense of mission, and gives us the grace of Perseverance. We will also recall how Jesus Himself was led by the Spirit to His work, and how it was through the Eternal Spirit that in His perfect Humanity He achieved His Mission and offered Himself without spot to God. We

would recall also how the work which God has given to us is a work that can never be a lonely, isolated work, but must always have vital relation to the varied ministries which others also fulfil in the fellowship of the Spirit-bearing Body, the Church.

We might emphasise this sense of Vocation, for ourselves and for others, by using this Collect :—

Almighty and everlasting God, by Whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified, Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Then we can take up the Ideal of Service which the Apostle gives, and ask God to stamp it afresh upon our lives, and so to quicken our wills, to stir our affections, and to enlighten our minds afresh by the Grace of this Communion, that we may more cheerfully and more perfectly fulfil His holy will.

Let love be without dissimulation. The varieties of ministry may be many, for we have gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, but the primary and universal mark of all Service is Love.

O Lord Jesus Christ, I would bring to Thee in this Holy Eucharist all the work which Thou hast given me to do, for Thou hast toiled, and Thou hast served, and Thou hast fulfilled the will of the Father. Make me sincere and faithful in all my work. Take from me all hypocrisy and deceit. Purify my motives and make me single of purpose and of heart, that I may willingly offer the unselfish service of love in the performance of all my duties.

Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Holiness lies at the root of all true service and gives permanence to all our work.

Jesus, Who art perfectly good, Who hatest iniquity, help me to abhor that which is evil. I confess to Thee the love of so much that is evil—sins of thought and word and deed—which have marred the perfection of my work. By the power of the Holy Spirit, renew in me a true resolve to love that which I know to be good. Help me to follow Thee steadfastly in the paths of righteousness, and may the love of Thy Blessed Presence in the Holy Eucharist be manifested by the obedience of my life to Thee in all that is holy. Strengthen in me, O Lord, that which is good, and drive from me all that is evil.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.

O Lord, Who hast chosen for me the companions of my life and work, direct me aright, that I

may be gentle and loving and kind towards all. Forgive me, O Lord, my want of love and kindness, in the home and at work. Teach me to love all truly for Thy sake, and to love others better than myself. I am truly sorry for my want of generosity towards others, my thoughts so often centred on self, my neglect to appreciate the claims of others. Grant to me, Blessed Lord, the grace of a true, unselfish love, the power to see the greatness of others, and the desire to see them happy and successful according to Thy will.

Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The secret of thorough work is the recognition that in all its details, however mechanical and mean they may be, it is work for God Himself. That gives dignity to every occupation and maintains a spirit ever fervent and zealous.

Grant to me, Lord, in all my work an ever-present sense of Thy vocation. Forgive me the imperfections of my work, the frequent neglect of detailed perfection, the spending of energies and time unduly on other interests. I am sorry for the listlessness of my endeavours, the lack of zeal, the low standard of work, the forgetfulness of Thy presence. I desire, dear Lord, in this Eucharist to renew my service of Thee in all my work. Kindle in me new zeal, and may the Grace of Thy Altar dignify all my work with the enabling power of Thy Sacramental Presence.

Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation. The spirit of Hope and Joy and the power of patient endurance are distinguishing marks of all Christian work, and both alike are renewed at the Altar.

Jesus, Who art both the Man of Sorrows and the Man of abiding Joy, grant that I may enter into Thy hope and be made partaker of Thy patient endurance. I am sorry for all the hopelessness, the despair, the faithlessness that have taken the joy out of my work. I truly grieve for my impatience to bear sorrow and disappointment. O Lord, I desire before the Altar to renew my trust and hope in Thee, to receive Thy great gift of Eucharistic joy, to offer my true thanksgiving for all Thy love, to gain from Thee the power to endure and to suffer bravely for Thy sake.

Continuing instant in prayer. The Spirit of Prayer underlies all true work. It is the spirit of continuous oblation, the consecration of all service.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who in the days of Thy earthly Ministry didst rise up a great while before day and depart into a solitary place to pray, and now dost ever offer Thy unceasing Intercession for us before the Father, I am truly sorry that my prayers are so poor, so infrequent, so inconstant, so selfish, so wanting in faith and love. Grant, O Blessed Lord, that in this highest and most unselfish Act of Prayer, I may learn to be more constant in prayer, and

may use the Grace of this Communion to renew my habits of Meditation and all my Godward desires, and may gain a new power of Recollection and live more consciously in Thy Presence.

Distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you. Bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. These are all ways in which the Spirit of Love informs our work and binds us to observe the law of fellowship. Generosity, sympathy, peaceableness, kindness even towards those who show no kindness to us—these are the marks of the Life of true Service, in which we are to fulfil the command, *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* We approach the Altar therefore with the conviction that in our lives the Goodness and Power of Jesus, granted to us in this Eucharist, will overcome all evil and all weakness, and enable us to be more faithful in our Life of Service. Perhaps we might conclude such a Preparation as this with some Simple Act of Commendation, in which we make an offering of all our work to Him Who alone can make it perfect.

Lord Jesus, I commit myself to Thee ; make me Thine own. I commit myself to Thy Mercy ; cleanse me from all my sins. I commit all my work to Thee ; take it into Thy keeping and

make it perfect. I commit myself to Thy Bounty ; grant me the riches of Thy Grace. I commit myself to Thy Wisdom ; guide me into Thy Truth and make me perfect in Thy ways. I commit myself to Thy Power ; strengthen me with Thy Might. To the love of Thy Sacred Heart I commit all those who work with me and all for whom I work. Keep us and unite us to Thee, to one another, and to Thy whole Church, by these Thy Holy Mysteries, that we may conquer all evil, and be wholly devoted to Thy service, Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest one God for ever and ever. Amen.

VIII

PSALM CXLIII

SOMETIMES through the medium of a Psalm it is possible to give special point and reality to our Preparation. There are several Psalms which through long use in the Church are associated very closely with the Eucharist. Such are Psalm xxiii., the Psalm of the Good Shepherd ; Psalm xxvi., with its call to purity of heart ; Psalm xxxiv., with its confidence in God's graciousness ; Psalm xliii., expressing joyful approach to the Altar ; Psalm lxxxiv., describing the happiness of the Sanctuary ; Psalm ciii., the hymn of thanksgiving ; Psalm cxl., with its reliance upon God's faithfulness ; Psalms li., cxxx., and cxlili., Psalms of penitence ; and Psalm cl., the great hymn of praise. These all emphasise different attitudes of the soul which find their highest expression in the service of the Altar.

This chapter suggests a way in which such Psalms may be used in preparation for the Eucharist, and, as an example, Psalm cxlili. has been chosen. There are two ways in

which the subject might be treated here. The chapter might be written in the form of an Instruction, suggesting in a general way the lines upon which we should proceed in making our Preparation. Or it might be cast in the form of an actual Meditation, representing the address of the soul itself to God. Perhaps it will be most useful to adopt the form of a Meditation.

*Hear my prayer, O Lord, and consider my desire.
Hearken unto me for Thy truth and righteousness' sake.*

Almighty and merciful God, I draw near to make the great appeal of the Holy Eucharist, to open out to Thee my desires, to disclose my wants, to lay bare my infirmities, to seek Thy help. Upon Thee I rely, Who keepest covenant and mercy with them that love Thee, the God of Faithfulness, of Truth and Holiness. For the sake of Thy dear Son, Whose infinite merits we plead in this Holy Sacrifice, hear me and fulfil all my desire.

*And enter not into judgment with Thy servant.
For in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.*

But, Lord, most Holy, I am not worthy to come into Thy Presence. In the light of Thy Holiness, I see the greatness of my sin. I would recount before Thee my sins—of thought, and word, and deed. Cover my many sins with the merits of Thy dear Son, and for His sake for-

give me all my sins, and grant that with humble confidence in the assured grace of His forgiveness I may approach the Altar of Thy Love.

For the enemy hath persecuted my soul. He hath smitten my life down to the ground. He hath laid me in the darkness, as the men that have been long dead. Therefore is my spirit vexed within me, and my heart within me is desolate.

I bring to Thee, Who art the God of mercies and Father of consolation, all the sorrows of my heart, all the defeats and failures of my life. Before the assaults of Satan I have been beaten back. Old sins have regained their hold upon me. New sins have surprised me. Hope has deserted me. Desolation and despair have harassed me. The darkness of fear and hopelessness has been upon me. But now, O Lord, I bring to Thee, Who art my Hope, all my fears and all my disquietude. Do Thou turn my heaviness to joy and give me victory in the battle.

Yet do I remember the time past. I muse upon all Thy works. Yea, I exercise myself in the works of Thy hands.

For I call to mind Thy manifold mercies in the days that are past. How many are the blessings with which Thou hast enriched my life—temptations overcome, graces won, the gift of friends, the preservation of health, the renewal of opportunity, the beauties and loveliness of life, the

stirring of high ideals, the awaking of new powers. May Thy Holy Spirit keep me in perpetual remembrance of the triumphs of Thy grace and power, and inspire me with new hope as I draw near to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. For all Thy many mercies I would thank Thee anew in this Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

I stretch forth my hands unto Thee. My soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land. Hear me, O Lord, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint. Hide not Thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit.

The remembrance of Thy mercy makes me long anew for Thy Presence. With ardent desire I seek the fulness of Thy Grace. Sustain Thou me in my weariness. Show Thou me the light of Thy countenance that I may be whole. Reveal to me in this Blessed Sacrament the Love of Jesus, and strengthen me with the blessed food of His most precious Body and Blood. Thou, Who knowest the very secrets of the heart, accept and bless the hidden longings of my soul, and in this Holy Eucharist satisfy all my desires with the fulness of Thy Presence.

O let me hear Thy lovingkindness betimes in the morning, for in Thee is my trust. Shew Thou me the way that I should walk in, for I lift up my soul unto Thee. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies, for I flee unto Thee to hide me.

Bless the first hours of the day, dear Lord, with the grace of Thy loving-kindness and grant that the whole day may echo the joy of Thy coming. In Thee, O Lord, do I trust for guidance and for strength. Show Thou me the way that I should walk in, reveal to me Thy will and make me obedient to Thy Word. Into union with Thee I would lift up my soul, that in this Eucharist I may read Thy precious purpose for me and may be conformed to Thy will. Hidden in Thee, I would take refuge from all my foes, and find safety in the midst of temptation, and protection from all sin. By the Power of Thy Presence, deliver me, O Lord, from all evil.

Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee, for Thou art my God. Let Thy loving Spirit lead me forth into the land of righteousness.

O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee. Teach me to do Thy will and to love what Thou commandest. Teach me to leave my will, and in this Eucharist to seek Thee only and Thy glory. Grant that, refreshed by the Grace of the Altar, I may grow in the Communion of the Holy Ghost, respond more fully to His inspirations, and make progress in the way of holiness. Lead me but one step onward and give me grace to follow.

Quicken me, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake. And for Thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of

*trouble. And of Thy goodness slay mine enemies,
and destroy all them that vex my soul.*

New life, O Lord, I seek of thee, Who art Life eternal. Quicken me in Thy compassion and save me for Thy mercies' sake. By the power of this Eucharist make me, I pray Thee, more than conqueror over all the sins that so frequently beset me. May the joy of Thy Presence drive away all sorrow, anxiety, and fear. To Thy Power I commend all my weakness, all my sin. Thy Grace is sufficient for me. In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust. I shall never be confounded.

For I am Thy servant.

In humility, O Lord, I offer myself anew to Thee, to serve Thee with all the powers of my life. O my God, I am not mine own, but Thine. Take me for Thine own. I give myself to Thee—for joy, for sorrow—for sickness, for health—for life, for death—for time and for eternity. Make me and keep me Thine own, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

IX

ADORATION

OF necessity in the foregoing chapters we have been mostly concerned with thoughts that gather round our own selves. They have not been wrongly selfish. It has been the true preparation of Self, that there may be a fuller outgoing of Self at the Coming of our Lord. These next chapters suggest definite ways in which that outgoing of Self may be realised in the Presence of our Blessed Lord, along the ways of Adoration, Thanksgiving, and Intercession. The thoughts are simple indeed and are simply expressed. The words are offered only as suggestions and hints towards a fuller enrichment of those parts of Prayer, in the exercise and expression of which, many who love our Lord find unusual difficulty.

Worship and Adoration, as well as Intercession and Thanksgiving, are in themselves sufficient reasons for our attendance at the Holy Eucharist. Where Jesus is, we love to be. We should use the Eucharist as a special opportunity of exercis-

ing our most unselfish faculties of worship. Our Blessed Lord, present in the Sacrament of the Altar, is the object of our highest adoration. We may not always feel the emotional thrill of happy worship, but we can always make the oblation of the will, while we kneel on silently in His presence and adore Him in the simplicity of obedience and faith. "Behold Thy King cometh unto thee, lowly." When Jesus comes to His Altar Throne, we may offer Him the fulness of our worship with such words of adoration as these :—

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace.

O Jesus Christ, present in this Blessed Sacrament, we worship Thee, we praise Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.

O Jesus, Eternal Son of God, revealed to us here in the lowliness of Thy Incarnate Love, we worship Thee with all our hearts, with all our minds, with all our souls, and with all our strength.

We bow before Thee, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and offer to Thee anew the empire of our lives—our hearts, our minds, our wills.

Bread of Heaven, strength and refreshment of our souls and bodies, we worship Thee present in this Sacrament of Life.

Shepherd of Souls, we praise Thee and commend ourselves afresh to Thy loving guidance.

Most Holy Jesus, we bow before Thy Holiness and ask to be filled with the love of all that is holy and good and true.

Blessed Jesus, Whose delights are with the sons of men, we adore Thee for the lowliness of Thy Incarnation. Reveal Thyself to us here in the intimacies of Thy Holy Friendship.

Jesus, the Faithful Witness, the Amen, fulfil to us, who worship Thee in this Sacrament, all the promises of Thy Love.

Jesus, Almighty God, we adore the majesty of Thy Eternal Power, Who rulest over all, God blessed for ever.

Jesus, Thou Son of Man, we adore Thee for the sympathy, the suffering, and the example of Thy Incarnate Life.

Jesus, Thou King of Angels, we praise Thee for the uplifting ministries of Thy obedient servants, our fellow worshippers, the Holy Angels.

We kneel before Thee, our High Priest, ever interceding for us sinners, and plead before the Father the merits of Thy all-atoning Sacrifice.

O Jesus Christ, Spotless Victim, Sinless Offering, with joy and reverence and humility we plead Thee and Thine infinite Merits before the Father in this Eucharistic Sacrifice.

Jesus, King of Paradise, we adore Thee and pray that by this Sacrifice we may be knit more closely to those who are this day with Thee in Paradise.

O Jesus, Lover of Souls, teach us how to love Thee, help us to bear our cross daily, and in paths of love to follow Thee.

Jesus, Who hast conquered sin and death, we bow before Thee in this Sacrament of Power ; grant us victory in all the conflicts of life.

Jesus, Thou Rest of the restless and Strength of the weary, we praise Thee for the comfort of Thy Presence and offer to Thee all the sorrows, sufferings, and anxieties of our life.

Grant, O Blessed Jesus, that this our Eucharistic worship on earth may be a saving preparation for the perfect worship of Heaven, where Thou, Whom now we behold and adore beneath these earthly veils, shalt be revealed in the Beatific Vision of the Blessed Trinity.

X

THANKSGIVING

IN our Eucharistic Service the thought of Thanksgiving is first prominently suggested at the *Sursum Corda* and the Preface. Let us at that moment lift up hearts full of Thanksgiving to our Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and then, after the Consecration, when Christ has come to His Altar Throne, recount before Him in humble gratitude some of the mercies which He has so bountifully lavished upon us. We shall thank Him for such gifts as these :—

That He has deigned to become Incarnate for our sakes and while we were yet sinners to die for us upon the Cross.

That He has left to us in the Church the certain gifts of Grace, the Fellowship of the Spirit, and His own Eucharistic Presence.

That He has made us Members of the Catholic Church of England, inheriting high traditions of faithfulness and sanctity, and precious opportunities of serving the Peace of Christendom.

That He has blessed our Empire to the spread of the knowledge of His Love throughout the world.

That He has granted to our land the blessings of Peace.

That He has roused in every class an earnest desire for closer Fellowship and has quickened the impulses of true Brotherhood.

For the deepening of the desire for closer visible unity among all believers.

For the unselfish labours of all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and of all men and women workers in the Mission Field.

For the devotion of all men and women dedicated to the Religious Life.

For the faithfulness and happy witness of all earnest Communicants.

For the gift of Vocation and the help of the Holy Spirit to respond to it.

For the blessings of health and friendship and for daily preservation from harm both of body and soul.

For the gifts of Faith, Hope, Love, and Penitence.

For all spiritual blessings vouchsafed to us at the Altar.

For the beauty of Eucharistic Worship.

For the infinite merits of the Eucharistic Pleading.

For the Grace of many Communions.

**For the life, teaching, and intercession of our great
Spiritual Guides and Teachers who are now at
rest.**

**For the joy of belief in the Communion of Saints
and for the revelation of Paradise.**

For the hope of Glory.

XI

INTERCESSION

AS examples of the way in which the Presence of Christ leads us out to unselfish Intercession, we might take three of the most familiar and ever-urgent subjects of Prayer : (1) The Church ; (2) The Sick, Sorrowful, and Suffering ; (3) Christian Education.

I

THE CHURCH

When Christ has come to His Altar Throne let us worship Him, the Divine Head of the Church, and plead His inexhaustible merits on behalf of His Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, praying, in such words as our own hearts suggest, for these special blessings :—

That the Church Universal may richly manifest the gifts of His All-Holy Spirit.

That the Church may attain a fuller expression of visible unity throughout the world.

That the rich blessing of God may rest upon the English Church.

That the Missionary Work of the Church may be abundantly blessed.

That all Christian bodies in this land may be gathered into the fellowship and unity of the Church and enjoy the fulness of sacramental life.

That our Church may bear witness to the faith once delivered to the Saints and realise the fulness of her Catholic heritage.

That the guidance of the Church may be wisely given in all national efforts for the increase of righteousness, the relief of distress, the education of children, the development of intellectual life, and the realisation of brotherhood.

That the Church may attain the exercise of full freedom and independence in all spiritual things and may be wisely led in her relations towards the State.

That all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons may be endowed with wisdom, holiness, and zeal, and inspired with a true love of souls.

That many more may be called to the Ministry and the way made clear for the acceptance of their Vocation.

That all Members of the Church may make full proof of their privileges, may be faithful and loving partakers of the Sacraments, and effective witnesses in their lives to the fulness of Catholic truth.

That the sick, the weary, and the distressed may be uplifted by the prayers of the Church.

That the Presence of our Blessed Lord in the Eucharist may be increasingly honoured and adored.

That to the Church in Paradise may be granted abundance of Light, Peace, and Refreshment.

That we on earth may realise in the Eucharist the fulness of Communion with the Saints departed.

II

THE SICK, THE SORROWFUL, AND THE SUFFERING

Picture the tender ministries of our Lord in the days when "they brought unto Him all that were diseased, and all the city was gathered at the door." Recall His loving invitation to the sorrowful, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," and His promise, "I will give you rest." Recall His tears at the grave of Lazarus. Call to mind the agonies of the Passion and the Crucifixion, by which the Man of Sorrows entered into most real sympathy with human pain and by which the Captain of our Salvation was "made perfect through suffering."

And now, when in the lowly splendour of His Eucharistic Presence He comes to His Altar

Throne, let us worship Him and plead before the Father the infinite merits of His Death and Passion on behalf of the sick, the sorrowful, the bereaved, and the suffering. Pray for such gifts as these :—

That God will look mercifully upon all the sick, the sad, and the suffering, and grant them patience and restoration.

That all those who are ill may realise the comfort of the Holy Spirit and the soothing ministries of the Holy Angels.

That the time of sickness may be blessed to all sufferers for the deepening of their love, the readier acceptance of God's Will, and the quickening of their devotion.

That the gifts of Ghostly Strength, Patience, Faith, and Hope may be granted to all who suffer.

That Jesus, the Good Physician of body and of soul, may soothe by His Presence every pain, hallow all sufferings by His all-holy Passion, and teach all sufferers the joy of closer union with Himself.

That those who are incurably ill may humbly accept the Will of God and yield themselves in penitence and hope to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit.

That the hope and faith of the aged may be undimmed in the midst of growing infirmities, and

that their mental faculties may be preserved unto the end.

That to those who suffer from loss of memory, affliction of mind, and great bodily distress may be granted the secret ministries and consolation of the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

That the refreshment and inspiration of the Holy Spirit may be granted to all those who are suffering from mental debility or affliction.

That to all those in spiritual affliction, in distress of faith, despondency, perplexity, or doubt may be granted the joy and peace of assured belief.

That those who are sick or dying in the loneliness of a foreign land may have the refreshment of the Holy Spirit and enjoy the full blessings of the Communion of Saints.

That the dying may omit nothing that is needful to make their peace with God before they die.

That the sick and dying may ever be fortified with the Sacraments of the Church.

That all Priests may have the special guidance of the Holy Spirit and Divine Protection in their ministries to the sick.

That the blessing of God may rest upon all doctors and nurses in their ministries of healing.

That the guidance and protection of God may be granted to all hospitals, asylums, and homes for the sick and dying.

That all those who are brought into continual contact with suffering may have their faith strength-

ened and their hearts cheered by the special gift of the Holy Ghost.

That all those who mourn may experience the consolation of the Holy Spirit and be refreshed with the deep comfort of the Catholic Faith.

That the Sacrament of Holy Anointing may take its due place in the ministries of the Church to the sick and dying.

That the Holy Spirit may more fully direct, guide, and instruct the Church in the relation of Faith to the Healing of the Body.

That the abundance of the Divine Light, Peace, and Refreshment may be shed upon the souls of all the departed.

III

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Let us recall the love of Jesus for Children and remember His words "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." Reflect on the infinite honour which He has placed upon child-life by granting to the little ones the Sacrament of Regeneration ; and then plead the merits of His Love and Passion before the Throne of the Father, adoring His Presence and offering for the children of our Church and Nation such prayers as these :—

That God will forgive us all the sins of bitterness, prejudice, illwill, and pride, which have estranged any from His love.

That the Church may have a true and deep love for the souls of all children.

That we may have a deep and earnest faith in the reality of God's good guidance and His power.

That we may be enabled by the witness of our lives to impress upon others the beauty and the necessity of the Catholic Faith for the fulness of life and the perfect achievement of the duties of citizenship.

That the Counsels of Parliament may be preserved from all sectarian bitterness, from the errors of unbelief, and from the sins of irreverence and indifference to the spiritual needs of the children.

That unity of aim, and the spirit of true insight and wisdom, may be granted to the leaders of the Church in the guidance of Christian Education.

That guidance, courage, gentleness, and perseverance may be granted to those who steadfastly uphold the Catholic Faith.

That Clergy and Laity alike may be strenuous, just, and firm in the defence of full religious liberty in the teaching of the Elementary Schools.

That Parents may be roused to a deep sense of their own responsibilities and may bear witness both at home and in public life to the value of the teaching of the Faith in all Schools.

That a strong sense of discipline may be aroused in the hearts of all parents.

That in all Church Training Colleges the unrestricted liberty of full Church teaching may be assured for all pupils.

That to all Teachers may be granted the grace of personal devotion to our Blessed Lord, true knowledge of the Faith and the power of persuasive teaching.

That none of those who love the Faith and have a true desire to teach may be deprived of this opportunity of serving their Blessed Master.

That to all who teach the young, at home, in all Schools and Colleges, may be granted the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

That nothing may hinder the regular daily continuance of lessons in the Christian Faith for all children in all schools.

That all the children may grow up to love Jesus and to worship Him as their God and Saviour.

That the services of the Catechism may be prospered to the increase of the Faith.

That God's blessing may rest upon all Sunday Schools to the attainment of stricter discipline and greater efficiency in teaching.

That the devotion of all Sunday School Teachers may be abundantly blessed.

That in the great Public Schools religious instruction may be regular, definite, and persuasive.

That the Universities may be preserved as bulwarks of the Faith and true homes of religious and sound learning.

That we may use every movement of public interest in Education to the spread of the Faith, the peace of the Church, and the final increase of goodwill among all who love God.

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